(c) Funds released during last 3 years are as under:—

(Rs. in lacs)

Scheme	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1. Vegetable	14.96	7.00	9.50
2. Root & Tuber Crops	0.00	1.69	0.50
3. Mushroom	0.00	0.00	1.50
4. Crop Estimation Survey	25.25	24.00	27.00

(d) The utilisation under the schemes namely Vegetables, root & tuber Crops and Mushroom during the last 3 years mentioned in reply to part (c) above was Rs. 30.85 lakhs against the releases of Rs. 35.15 lakhs. However, funds released under Crop Estimation Survey on Fruits, Vegetables & Minor Crops were fully utilised by the State.

(e) Minitoring is being done regularly so as to ensure that the State Government utilises the funds fully and achieve the targets.

Replacement of Haj Act

*340. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are bringing legislation to replace the present Haj Act;

(b) whether Government would introduce the Haj bill which has been drafted by the Commitee of MPs. constituted by the External Affairs Ministry shortly; and

(c) whether Government are going to reconstitute the Haj committee, which is long over due; if so, when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The present Haj Commitee Act was passed in 1959, i.e. over 39 years ago. The question of replacing this Act with an act that would take into account the major changes that have taken place in the area of Haj management both in India and Saudi Arabia, has been under consideration of Government for several years. At the end of last year, a nine-member Advisory Commitee consisting of Muslim, Members of Parliament and former Members of Parliament had been constituted. This Committee had prepared a draft Haj Bill to replace the existing Act.

2. The draft was circulated to elicit the comments of other Government departments as also of the State Governments. On the basis of these comments, a revised draft Bill is now under preparation. This Ministry is presently engaged in consultations with other Government departments and State Governments to determine the most appropriate and feasible model for Haj management for India. The experience of other countries in Haj management is also being taken into account.

3. The present Haj Committee Act provides for the constitution of a Haj Committee that would have a minimum life of three years; no maximum life is provided for in the Act. The present Haj Committee was constituted on October 12, 1993, and, thus, completed three years of its existence on October 11, 1996. The Government has decided to reconstitute the Haj Committee and has asked or fresh nominations from the Hon'ble Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and the State Government of Maharashtra in respect of nominations from the Maharashtra Government, the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly and the Mumbai Minicipal Corporation as provided for under the Haj Committee Act. The Government will also nominate

two members. Thereafter, with the co-option of three more members and publication of the names of all the members in the Gazette, the new Haj Committee will be in place.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Cold Storage plans in Assam

2439. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the specific reasons for not establishing any cold storage plants for agriculture and horticulture produce in Assam during the last five decades;

(b) whether Government propose to set up cold storage plants for the said purpose in the State during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government have made a detailed survey to find out the number, location, capacity and specific pattern required for setting up of such plants in the State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (c) The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) provides loan assistance to the cooperatives through the State Governments to set up cold storage in the country, So far, NCDC has assisted one cold storage unit of 1000 tonne capacity in Guawahati during the year 1968-69. However, State Cooperative Marketing Federation could not operate it successfully and, therefore, the unit was ultimately closed. NCDC has not received any other proposal from the State Government of Assam for setting up of cold storage in the cooperative sector. The National Horticulture Board (NHB) is providing financial assistance in the form of soft loan at the rate of 4% service charges for establishment of cold storages by Cooperative Societies, MGOs, Agribusiness Consortium, State Agro/Horticulture Corporations and Companies. The NHB did not receive any proposal from any organisation for establishment of cold storage in Assam upto 31st March, 1997. However, NHB has recently received a proposal from M/s Boruah and Company Ltd. for financial assistance to the extent of Rs. 35.00 lakhs for establishment of post-harvest management-cum-cold storage centre near Guwahati. The proposal has been examined and certain additional information has been sought from the company. It is the intention of the NHB to accord priority to proposals received from the North Eastern Region during the 9th Plan period.

(d) and (e) Such surveys are undertaken by the State Governments. NCDC and NHB consider proposals for assistance to cold storages as and when these are duly recommended by the concerned State Governments.

खाद्यान्नों और दलहनों का उत्पादन

2440. श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र: क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि इस वर्ष खाद्यान्नों का कुल उत्पादन पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में कम हुआ है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी राज्य-वार ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) क्या दलहनों और तिलहनों के उत्पादन में भी कमी आई है; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी राज्य-वार ब्यौरा क्या है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोम पाल): (क) से (घ) 1996-97 की तुलना में 1997-98 के दौरान खाद्यान्नों, दलहनों तथा तिलहनों का उत्पादन कुछ कम हुआ है। राज्य-वार ब्यौरे का विवरण संलग्न है (नीचे देखिये)